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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,024	07/11/2003	Yasunari Watanabe	03500.017406	2715
5514	7590	01/19/2005		EXAMINER
				NGO, HOANG X
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2852	

DATE MAILED: 01/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

A

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/617,024	WATANABE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hoang Ngo	2852	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oojiya in view of Saito et al.

Oojiya discloses an image forming apparatus comprising an image bearing member 1, a charging means 2 having a voltage to charge the image bearing member, control means 10 for controlling the voltage applied to the image bearing member, developing means 5 having developer component, residual charge eliminating 4 means for conducting charge elimination on the image bearing member; and the control means controls the voltage during an image forming period on the basis of an current flowing when applying the voltage that is twice or less than a discharge start voltage V_{th} of the image bearing member during a non-image forming period (Fig. 2), and the residual charge eliminating means conducts charge elimination on an area on the image bearing member that passes through a charging position of the charging means when applying the voltage that is twice or less than the discharge start voltage V_{th} of the image bearing member to the charging means (Fig. 2). Oojiya further discloses the residual charge eliminating means is exposure means and located on a downstream side of the charge means and an upstream side of the developing means with respect to the

moving direction of the image bearing member (Fig.1), the charging means is brought into contact with the image bearing member during charging and the charging means conducts charging by causing discharge between the charging means and the image bearing member (Fig. 1); the developing means performs developing by bringing the developer on the developing means into contact with the image bearing member (Fig. 1).

Oojiya does not disclose the voltage applied for charging the image bearing member is in the form of an AC voltage as recited in claim 1 or a voltage is applied to the developing means such that the toner is not adhered to the image bearing member and recycled back to the developing means. However, it is well known in the art as taught by Chigono et al to use the charging device 2 having AC voltage (Col. 3, lines 31-53) and as a cleaner less system, for example, where the developing means is functioned as both the cleaning means and developing means, using voltage applied to the developing means as means to recover the residual toner back to the developing device (Col. 6, lines 17-49). Therefore, to provide the charging device and the developing device for the image forming apparatus of Oojiya with an AC voltage type charging device and a developing means that includes cleaner less type, as suggested by Chigono et al, so that a more stable charging system and a simpler image forming apparatus can be employed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hoang Ngo whose telephone number is (571) 272-2138. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00am - 2:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur Grimley can be reached on (571) 272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Hoang Ngo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

Hxn